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OUTLINE OF PLAN FOR MILITARY TRAINING IN
PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF THE UNITED STATES

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PREPARED BY THE WAR COLLEGE DIVISION, GENERAL STAFF CORPS
AS A SUPPLEMENT TO THE STATEMENT OF A PROPER MILITARY
POLICY FOR THE UNITED STATES

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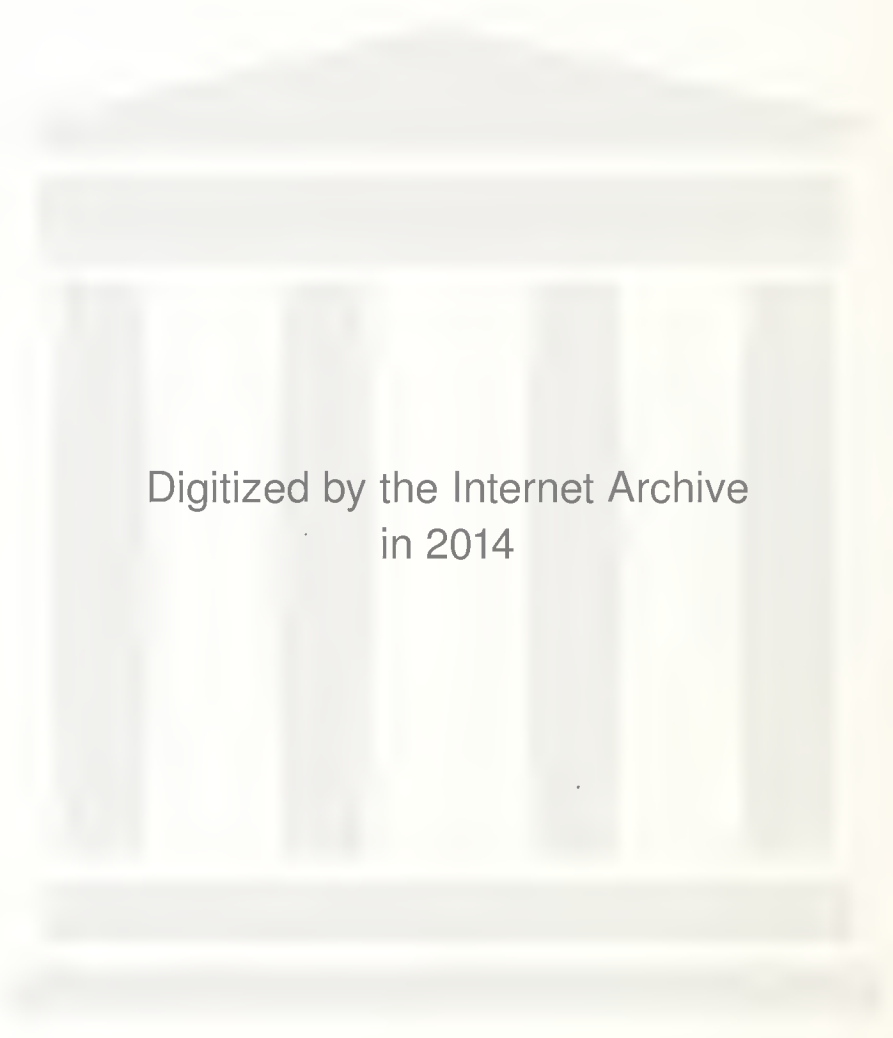
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SYNOPSIS.

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OUTLINE OF PLAN FOR MILITARY TRAINING IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF THE UNITED STATES.

I. INTRODUCTION.

In paragraph 6, Statement of a Proper Military Policy for the United States, it was shown that our military system should be able to furnish at the outbreak of war 500,000 trained and organized mobile troops, and to have available not less than 500,000 more 90 days thereafter. In addition, to supply losses and wastage in war, it is considered that, after the outbreak of hostilities, the system should provide a plan for raising and training 500,000 more.

To prepare for this task requires us to use every available means of educating the young as to their future duties as citizens.

If our democracy is to endure it must "recognize as its primary standard of duty the obligation of the individual man and woman to sacrifice themselves for the whole community in time of need."

The necessary elementary instruction that every young American should have in order to be prepared when the time comes to play his part in the national defense can be given in the public schools. Moreover, this can be done in such a way as to enlist parental approval, because of the manifest improvement of the scholars in physique, deportment, and obedience to authority at home as well as at school.

The object of the prescribed course of instruction is to inculcate high ideals and correct views on the duties of the citizen to the State. The training given is along military lines, but is so conducted as to encourage initiative and individuality, to correct defects and develop natural gifts, and to teach self-control by showing the value of obedience to superior authority. The old method of "breaking the will" by insisting on blind unreasoning obedience to arbitrary rules is replaced by one showing how to use the individual will in attaining the concerted effort known as "teamwork," which is the secret of efficiency, and which is dependent upon a conscious and willing obedience to a superior directing authority. Those who learn how to obey fit themselves to direct and by practicing self-control become imbued with the fundamental principle underlying good citizenship.

This is not a theoretical scheme. It is a practical system carefully worked out by Lieut. E. Z. Steever, United States Army, and applied with marked success in the public high schools of the State of Wyoming. It has been designated the "Wyoming plan," and its distinctive features are outlined in what follows.

II. THE WYOMING PLAN.

The Wyoming school authorities hold:

1. That good citizenship involves a willingness on the part of each able-bodied youth to make such effort and sacrifice as will prepare him for his obligations and duties as a citizen.

2. That this preparation embraces the following:

- (a) Military preparation.
- (b) Moral preparation.
- (c) Civic preparation.
- (d) Business preparation.
- (e) Educational preparation.

(A) MILITARY PREPARATION.

It is unsound to assume that any system of training its adolescent youth will remove from the nation the further responsibility of training its manhood.

Trained youth can not take the place of trained manhood. Youths make imitation, but not real, soldiers.

A thorough preliminary military training of its adolescent youth has been recognized in primitive as well as modern civilizations as the first step in the greater training of the tribe or nation.

With the civilized as with the primitive youth the "game" is the medium of all successful training. "Competition" is to youth what "security" is to old age.

According to the Wyoming plan all cadets are organized into competition units.

Leaders take "turnabouts" choosing the members of their units, so that each unit (squad, platoon, or company) is made up of an equal number of strong, medium, and weak lads.

After final choosing-up these units are fixed and can not be added to nor subtracted from.

All the work is done by competition units.

There are:

- Wall-scaling units.
- Infantry drill units.
- Troop leadership units.
- Scholarship units.
- Field firing units.
- Camp and field units.

Sponsors are elected from the girls in the mixed school and assigned to the competition units. The sponsors are in every sense members of the cadet organization. They attend all drills, are the leaders in all social functions, and while they do not actually drill the sponsors are entitled to and receive such individual rewards as may be won by their units.

Medals, ribbons, and distinctive marks on the uniform are given each member of a winning unit, the sponsor, of course, included.

Each cadet organization is based on the voluntary enlistment plan. The cadet classes are held generally during and not after school hours, and credit toward graduation is awarded therefor.

Cadet tournaments are held during the school year between the different high schools, to which the public is invited, and at which are held infantry drill, wall-scaling, field firing, and camp and field and troop leadership competition "games."

From the Wyoming experience is deduced the following system of training, adapted to the adolescent American youth. Local conditions will necessarily modify the application of this system, but the general principles on which it is based will obtain in any part of the United States, and will permit the evolution of a practical course suited to local conditions:

1. Cut the school year into separate, short, intensive training periods, working up through preliminary to final competition dates, with the fixed competition units.

2. September 1 to December 31, wall-scaling and calisthenic events; minimum of drill, maximum of body building.

3. January 1 to February 28, troop-leadership competitions, 12-inch Gettysburg war-game map. Include military policy of the United States.

4. January 1 to February 28, minimum of drill, maximum of gallery practice, group competitions.

5. March 1 to May 7, minimum of drill, maximum of range practice, and field-firing competitions.

6. May 8 to June 15, minimum of drill, maximum of camp and field problems, competitive between high schools.

7. All through school year, commencing in the spring and running through the following fall and winter, take boys into camp each week-end and harden them to the rigors of camp life. Teach them sanitation, cooking, woodcraft, simple field engineering, plains-craft, castramentation, sketching, scouting, patrolling, the service of security and information, and qualify them as guides in their own immediate surrounding territory.

8. Summer camp immediately after closing of school, 14 days.

DISCUSSION OF COURSE IN MILITARY PREPARATION.

The organization that puts into effect the "game" idea differs fundamentally from the modern American athletic system. The cadet leaders choose up each in turn so that each fixed competition unit represents a certain proportion of strong, of medium, and of weak lads.

In football and basket ball and track events, only the *few physically fit take part*. In this system each squad represents an average and *every boy takes part*. There is as much "in it" for the weak as for the strong, and the survival of the fittest units, whether they be squads, platoons, or companies, gives the competition spirit.

(B) MORAL PREPARATION.

A nation stands or falls, succeeds or fails, just in proportion to the high-mindedness, cleanliness, and manliness of each succeeding generation of men.

In the Wyoming system the fundamental factor is the competition between equally balanced units. The individuals are forced by public opinion amongst their fellows to go into training, and this training means clean, moral youths. It is shown conclusively in the various competitions that clean men morally are the surest kind of winners. Smoking and immoral practices must go. Under the fiercest kind of competition, and a new and fascinating interest in life, the adolescent youth is better enabled to negotiate that difficult period of life.

(C) CIVIC PREPARATION.

It is almost a fundamental principle of correct military organization that the leader should not be voted for. The Wyoming system is not intended to make soldiers. The Wyoming schoolmasters are of the opinion that soldiers can only be made from mature manhood, and that the preparation of the adolescent youth should be such that when he reaches manhood he may then be made into the highest type of soldier. Hence the objection to voting for leaders does not obtain in the cadet organization, whereas the objection is perfectly valid in a military organization.

The cadet leaders are chosen at the beginning of each year by vote of the older cadets. The leaders are selected on merit, very much as the captain of the football team is selected for his merit. It has been noticeable that on the first organization, boy politics elect a certain percentage of popular but inefficient leaders, whose very inefficiency is later a terrible punishment to the members of their own units. The stress of competition soon brings out the real

leaders. The cadets never repeat their mistake. After the first election they take steps to insure a very wise and careful selection of leaders.

This civic lesson can not be wholly lost to them in years to come, when they are called upon as citizens to elect the leaders of their city, county, State, and National Governments.

(D) BUSINESS PREPARATION.

Teamwork and efficiency are prime requisites in the business life of to-day.

The soldier game can be made the keenest, as well as the most fascinating of all games, and efficiency is a necessity if a competition unit is to win. Not only must each man be worked to the limit of his capacity, but each competition unit leader must analyze his men and fit each to his proper place. The leaders are always leading and learning efficiency.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS.

1. That school boards throughout the United States be encouraged by the War Department to institute, in their school systems, a citizenship training similar to that outlined above.

2. That the proper authority request Congress to authorize the detail of United States Army officers as instructors in public school systems.

3. That tentage and field equipment of obsolete or modern pattern be issued to school boards under bond in the same manner that Krag rifles and ammunition are now furnished.

